

INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS

LOCAL UNION 953 NEWS – JANUARY 2024

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Michael Mountin, Asst. Bus. Mgr

Bandi Henke, Asst. Bus. Mgr

Nick Webber, Organizer

Grace Malone, Accountant

Kaitlyn Primeau, Admin. Coordinator

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E-mail Staff, see Web Page

For "Contact Us" link.



IBEW

... the *right* choice

Hello Members,

Hoping the New Year finds you well, over the past few months at Local 953 we have been busy finishing up many labor agreements that I am happy to report have been successful. Unions are one of the most essential parts of the economic system, especially when we experience times of instability and change, like we did in the majority of 2023. Unions have the ability to bargain over the effects of inflation pressures to ensure our members don't fall behind in this ever changing global economy. To date, our agreements have settled with increases not seen in decades. Moving forward, we are hoping to see more stability as we rebound from this post-pandemic world.

I am also happy to report that we sold our previous Union Hall for \$340,000 which was above the estimates we received on the property. This sale falls in line with the directives that were laid out with the Executive Board of Local 953. I would like to thank them for their efforts to make this happen and to continue to support the wise decisions we have made collectively.

Also as stated in my last newsletter article, I am happy to report our goal of having a storm agreement in place at Xcel Energy has come to fruition, this was a collective effort led by Assistant Business manager Tim Hemenway and a committee of field workers at Xcel Energy. I'm proud of them for their willingness to participate and grateful for the knowledge and input they shared during this process. With the completion of this agreement, it will allow us to move forward with other concerns regarding wage equalization and restructuring that have already taken place in areas of the Xcel North footprint. We will keep you posted of any developments regarding these matters at future meetings and newsletters.

Starting already this year we will we are preparing for contract negotiations for our Line Clearance Tree Workers and at Acuity Brand Winona Lighting Facility which both have agreements set to expire this Spring.

As Always, Work Safe!

In Solidarity,

Brady Weiss

Brady Weiss

Business Manager/Financial Secretary

Brothers and Sisters,

Hope everyone had a safe and happy holiday season.

Everyone at Xcel is aware of the significant changes that have taken place for the non-bargaining employees. Forced early retirements to lay-offs have changed the landscape of how we get business done. Prior to this "re-org", it was a challenge to get any Labor/Management issues resolved. Couple this with the "normal" retirements, Union and Non-Union, this didn't improve.

As the writing of this letter, Local 953 has had several meetings with Xcel regarding the Wisconsin Storm Agreement, Hour-In-Lieu-of, Boot Allowance, and several other grievances.

As we roll into 2024, it will be a challenge for all of us to remain focused on the tasks at hand. We will get through this, but we all must be patient and make it a priority to work safely and go home every day to our friends and family.

As always, if you have any questions or concerns, please contact me.

Hope you had Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!!!

In Solidarity,

Tim Hemenway

Tim Hemenway
Assistant Business Manager Local 953

Cooperative, St. Croix Electric Cooperative, Dairyland Power Cooperative, Chippewa Valley Electric Cooperative and Barron Electric Cooperative. Dates are set to commence negotiations at Price Electric Cooperative in December of 2023 as well. During the recent negotiations at the above utilities, we were able to secure favorable wage increases and other fringe benefits. The inflationary pressure we have all experienced in the last few years played a part in those equitable increases. Thankfully for us as Union members, we can negotiate our wages to offset some of that pressure. Also, thank you to the Stewards and Union members that participated directly in the negotiation process!

One last item I want to make you all aware of involves a recent grievance that went unresolved for the Dispatch Work Group at Dairyland Power Cooperative. The issue was centered around a dispute regarding Overtime, Mileage and Meals. We believe the bargaining group was unjustly denied payment and therefore we filed for arbitration. We made our case to an Arbitrator a few days before Thanksgiving and look forward to prevailing on our argument in the coming months. Thanks to Rob Overby and Jeff Witt for providing testimony and their time to fight for the Dispatch Work Group that was directly affected.

Until next time, Work Safe and have a Happy New Year! Don't forget about the ice fishing contest coming up soon as well... Hope to see you all there.

In Solidarity,

Mike Mountin

Mike Mountin
Assistant Business Manager Local 953

Hello Fellow Union Members,

Hopefully all of you were able to celebrate the recent holiday season with family and friends, enjoying some good food and fun. Work has been busy with seven different Cooperative agreements in total set to expire before the end of 2023. That has been my primary focus lately along with the day-to-day activities associated with supporting the membership.

Successor agreements have been reached at Eau Claire Energy Cooperative, Clark Electric



Brothers and Sisters,

Lately, I have been representing a fair amount of our members who are receiving severe disciplinary actions from their employers for various reasons including causing power outages and/or accidents on the jobsite and general horseplay while on the clock. When I investigated these situations over the past few months, one interesting theme has emerged: The entire crew knew what they were about to do was wrong and not only didn't exercise their stop work authority or cease the behavior but carried on with their actions and eventually contributed to problem. Please remember that you all have the ability to call a "time out" on the jobsite if you feel that your crew is about to do something unsafe, or against company policy. Please exercise that ability more often in the future so we can all go home safe. If something doesn't feel right in your gut, it probably isn't....so listen to your gut.

On a more positive note, Brady and I have reached a Tentative Agreement with Vernon Electric Cooperative. We feel it is an excellent contract and here are a few of the highlights: a 4-year deal with annual pay increases of 8%, 4%, 3%, 3.75% and a 1% increase in the employer's contribution to the 401k. We also negotiated some improvements in daily Foreman pay and future standby pay for the Line workers. I would like to thank Zach and Cole for being on the negotiations committee as that can be a difficult job. Next contract that I will be working on is the Line Clearance Tree Trimming (LCTT) Agreement that expires May 2024. I will be sending out an online link to those LCTT members soon for them to provide input for the proposed amendments to bring forth to the employers very soon. Please be looking for that in your personal email and/or personal cell phone (now would be a good time to make sure you call our Hall and update any emails or phone numbers) and your participation in that 3-minute survey will be key to obtaining a good, solid agreement.

Be safe and remember: **once divided, there is nothing left to subtract!**
Stay Strong!

Bandi Henke

Bandi Henke
Assistant Business Manager



Congratulations to this year's IBEW Local 953 Scholarship Winners!

Winners of Local 953 Scholarship:

Jace Zwiefelhofer, son of Dean Zwiefelhofer (Xcel Energy)
Abigail Nelson, daughter of Aaron Nelson (Xcel)
Tanner Kircher, son of Wayne Kircher (Xcel)
Austin Kopacz, son of Mark Kopacz (Xcel)
Kyle Tingo, son of Dan Tingo (Xcel)

Winners of CVTC Scholarships:

Easton Ashwell: Gas Utility Construction & Service
Cead Ewer: Electrical Power Distribution (EDP)

Winner of Southwest Tech Scholarship:

Austin Culpitt: Electrical Power Distribution (EDP)
Owen Laufenberg: Electrical Power Distribution (EDP)

Happy New Year!

From the Officers and Staff of Local 953

***Brady, Tim, Mike, Bandi, Nick
Grace and Kaitlyn***



Brothers and Sisters,

I would like to extend my best wishes from my family to yours this recent Holiday season. 2023 was an exciting year for the labor movement and our Local Union. As historic agreements were being settled from around the country, including UPS with the International Brotherhood of Teamsters and the "Big Three" with the United Auto Workers, here at Local Union 953 we too were passing excellent contracts, organizing lots of new members, and increasing our strength in our industry. I want to thank each of you for your contributions this year.

As we know, it has been increasingly difficult to cut through the unnecessary noise of the political arena, but I would like to share some important topics that are of particular interest to our Local Union. First, if you have attended any regional meetings as of late, I have mentioned the tremendous opportunity this Local and our industry has in our near future, the soon to be released "BEAD" (Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment) program. In short, this program will allocate \$1,055,823,573.71 (yes, you read that correctly) to the State of Wisconsin with the goal of all Wisconsinites having access to reliable and affordable internet over the next five (5) years. As it stands, we are working with the Wisconsin Public Service Commission on the rules regarding sub-grantees and labor standard guidelines as outlined in the NTIA (National Telecommunications and Information Administration), this process will wrap up by the time this newsletter hits your doorstep. This funding opportunity will provide a once in a lifetime opportunity for this Local Union in terms of work.

Secondly, at the state level, Local Union 953 and affiliated organizations are working hard to pass SB (Senate Bill) 481/ AB (Assembly Bill) 470. This bipartisan bill would allow incumbent utilities to have the "Right of First Refusal" when it comes to performing/bidding operational, maintenance, and/or construction work. This legislation, as practiced in neighboring states, does a few important things. First, encourages the use of local workforces and familiar contractors to perform work on our system. Secondly, avoids unnecessary red tape causing project delays. Third, protects Wisconsin ratepayers and system integrity by having safe, experienced workforces with relationships to our incumbent utilities performing

this work, as opposed to cheap, transient corporations attempting to perform our work.

In short, though there are no shortage of distractions in the political arena, it is increasingly important to be involved in issues such as the above that directly affect our livelihoods and our industry.

Looking forward to seeing you this year!

In Solidarity,

Nick Webber

Nick Webber
Local 953 Organizer

MEMBERSHIP NOTICE IBEW PER CAPITA INCREASE 2024

As per the IBEW Convention held May 9, 2022, the delegates voted to increase the per capita to the General Fund of \$2.00. There will also be an increase of \$2.00 in the IBEW Pension Benefit Fund (PBF), which applies to "A" members only. As per the July 14, 2023, Local 953 bylaws change, there is a \$1 per member, per month basic dues fee. The following rates will apply to the international office portion of all monthly dues payments for January 2024, and thereafter:

	<u>"A" Members</u>	<u>"BA" Members</u>
Per Capita	\$22.00	\$22.00
Pension Fund	\$21.00	<i>Not Applicable</i>
Local Fee	\$1.00	\$1.00
Total:	\$44.00	\$23.00

Please add the additional increase to your dues payments effective with your January 2024 dues.

Local 953 Annual Meeting Notice

Saturday, APRIL 6TH, 2024, at 9:00 A.M

Brickhouse Pub & Grub (formerly Eau Claire Labor Temple)
2233 Birch St.

Eau Claire, WI 54701

This Meeting is for ALL members. Have a voice in your Union!

LOCAL UNION 953 REGIONAL UNION MEETINGS**2024****WESTERN REGIONAL MEETINGS - THIRD WEDNESDAY**

DAY	DATE	PLACE	TIME
Wednesday	January 17, 2024		4:00 PM
Wednesday	February 21, 2024		4:00 PM
Wednesday	March 20, 2024	All meetings held at:	4:00 PM
Wednesday	April 17, 2024		4:00 PM
Wednesday	May 15, 2024	Meister's Bar & Grill	4:00 PM
Wednesday	June 19, 2024	1402 Cty Road A	4:00 PM
Wednesday	July 17, 2024	Boardman, WI	4:00 PM
Wednesday	August 21, 2024		4:00 PM
Wednesday	September 18, 2024		4:00 PM
Wednesday	October 16, 2024		4:00 PM
Wednesday	November 20, 2024		4:00 PM
Wednesday	December 18, 2024		4:00 PM

FLOATING REGIONAL MEETING SCHEDULE

DAY	DATE	PLACE	TIME
Thursday	January 4, 2024	American Legion, Alma, WI	5:15 PM
Thursday	February 1, 2024	VFW, Barron, WI	4:15 PM
Thursday	March 7, 2024	Wolf's Grantland Graphics, Lancaster, WI	5:30 PM
Tuesday	April 16, 2024	American Legion, Alma, WI	5:15 PM
Thursday	May 2, 2024	VFW, Barron, WI	4:15 PM
Thursday	June 6, 2024	Wolf's Grantland Graphics, Lancaster, WI	5:30 PM
Tuesday	July 16, 2024	American Legion, Alma, WI	5:15 PM
Thursday	August 1, 2024	VFW, Barron, WI	4:15 PM
Thursday	September 5, 2024	Wolf's Grantland Graphics, Lancaster, WI	5:30 PM
Thursday	October 3, 2024	American Legion, Alma, WI	5:15 PM
Thursday	November 7, 2024	VFW, Barron, WI	4:15 PM
Thursday	December 5, 2024	Wolf's Grantland Graphics, Lancaster, WI	5:30 PM

NORTHERN REGIONAL MEETINGS - FIRST WEDNESDAY

DAY	DATE	PLACE	TIME
Wednesday	February 7, 2024	Xmas Party	4:00 PM
Wednesday	March 6, 2024		4:00 PM
Wednesday	April 3, 2024		4:00 PM
Wednesday	May 1, 2024	All meetings at:	4:00 PM
Wednesday	June 5, 2024	The Chequamegon Hotel	4:00 PM
Wednesday	August 7, 2024	101 Lake Shore Dr. W	4:00 PM
Wednesday	September 4, 2024	Ashland, WI 54701	4:00 PM
Wednesday	October 2, 2024		4:00 PM
Wednesday	November 6, 2024		4:00 PM
Wednesday	December 4, 2024		4:00 PM

CENTRAL REGIONAL MEETINGS - SECOND WEDNESDAY

DAY	DATE	PLACE	TIME
Wednesday	January 10, 2024	Central Christmas Party at the Labor Temple	4:00 PM
Wednesday	February 14, 2024		4:00 PM
Wednesday	March 13, 2024		4:00 PM
Wednesday	April 10, 2024	All meetings at:	4:00 PM
Wednesday	May 8, 2024		4:00 PM
Wednesday	June 12, 2024	Union Hall	4:00 PM
Wednesday	July 10, 2024	4205 Southtown Dr.	4:00 PM
Wednesday	August 14, 2024	Eau Claire, WI 54703	4:00 PM
Wednesday	September 11, 2024		4:00 PM
Wednesday	October 9, 2024		4:00 PM
Wednesday	November 13, 2024		4:00 PM
Wednesday	December 11, 2024		4:00 PM

SOUTHERN REGIONAL MEETINGS - SECOND THURSDAY

DAY	DATE	PLACE	TIME
Thursday	January 11, 2024		5:00 PM
Thursday	February 8, 2024		5:00 PM
Thursday	March 14, 2024	All meetings at:	5:00 PM
Thursday	April 11, 2024		5:00 PM
Thursday	May 9, 2024	American Legion Post 336	5:00 PM
Thursday	June 13, 2024	731 Sand Lake Road	5:00 PM
Thursday	July 11, 2024	Onalaska, WI	5:00 PM
Thursday	August 8, 2024		5:00 PM
Thursday	September 12, 2024		5:00 PM
Thursday	October 10, 2024		5:00 PM
Thursday	November 14, 2024	Stew Feed & Retiree's Night	5:00 PM
Thursday	December 12, 2024		5:00 PM

2024



I.B.E.W. LOCAL 953

ANNUAL FAMILY ICE FISHING

DERBY

MEMBERS AND IMMEDIATE FAMILY OF MEMBERS
WELCOME TO JOIN US FOR OUR ANNUAL ICE
FISHING DERBY!

**ENTRY
\$10 PER
PERSON**



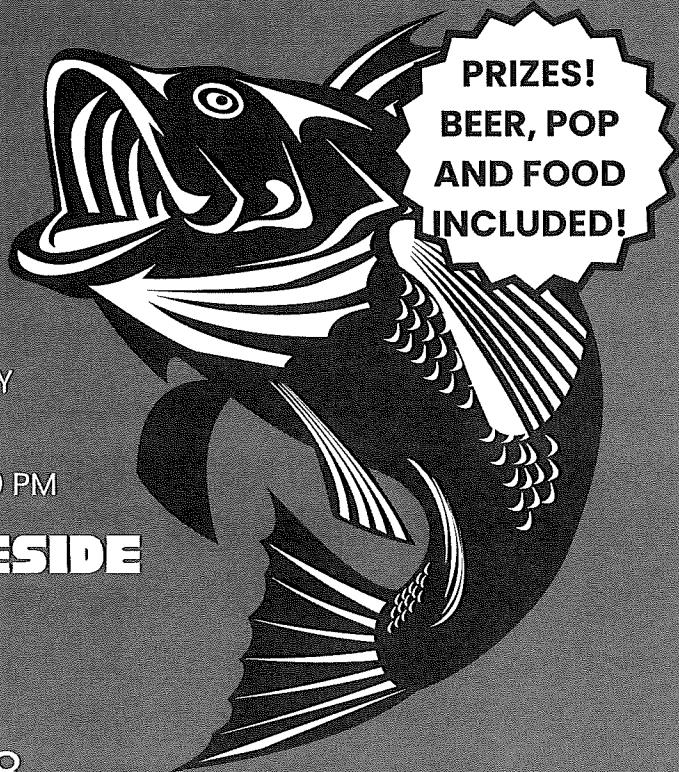
ON SATURDAY, FEBRUARY
10, 2024



START AT 11:00 AM - 3:00 PM

**POKEGAMA LAKESIDE
CANTINA**

840 Banks Lane
Chetek, WI 54728



**PRIZES!
BEER, POP
AND FOOD
INCLUDED!**

**PLEASE RETURN BACKSIDE REGISTRATION AND
FEE ASAP TO: LOCAL UNION 953 IBEW, 4205
SOUTHTOWNE DRIVE; EAU CLAIRE, WI 54701**

Local 953 Annual Family Ice Fishing Derby

THE FISH ARE JUDGED ON LENGTH ONLY.
ALL ENTRANT'S FISH MUST MEET MINIMUM LENGTH
REQUIREMENTS SET FOR THE LAKE.

PRIZES TO BE GIVEN AWAY INSIDE THE POKEGAMA
LAKESIDE TAVERN & GRILL.

-The Prizes-

1st Place Game Fish
2nd Place Game Fish
1st Place Pan Fish
2nd Place Pan Fish

Gun Raffle

MUST BE PRESENT TO WIN

DETACH HERE



2024 ICE FISHING DERBY REGISTRATION FORM

PLEASE RETURN THIS REGISTRATION AND FEE ASAP TO:
LOCAL UNION 953 IBEW, 4205 SOUTHTOWNE DRIVE; EAU CLAIRE, WI 54701

Name _____

Address _____

IBEW Local 953
4205 Southtowne Dr.
Eau Claire, WI 54701

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IBEW. ...the *right* choice



**Integrity
is doing the
right thing, even when
no one is watching.**

C.S. Lewis



WEINGARTEN RIGHTS

I believe this discussion could lead to my being disciplined. I therefore request that my union representative or officer be present to assist me at the meeting. I further request reasonable time to consult with my union representative regarding the subject and purpose of the meeting. Please consider this a continuing request; without representation I shall not participate in the discussion. I shall not consent to any searches or tests affecting my person, property or effects without first consulting with my union representative.

INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL
WORKERS LOCAL UNION 953
(715) 834-4911

